

CROSSSECTION



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Clean Beaches Start in Your Yard</i>	1
<i>Where's My Seedling? ...</i>	1
<i>Envirothon Takes Northeast Ohio</i> <i>by Storm</i>	2
<i>Sweep Away Stormwater Pollution Potential</i>	3
<i>Rain Barrels: Coming to a Downspout Near You</i>	3
<i>Who Wants to be a Conservationist?</i>	4

CLEAN BEACHES START IN YOUR YARD

Nothing ruins a family trip to the beach like a water quality closing. Sometimes these are caused by increased human or animal activity along a sheltered beach. However, polluted runoff from nearby communities is more often the culprit.

Bacteria can enter the water from several sources. These include sewage overflows, domestic animal waste, malfunctioning septic systems, and illegal discharge of boat waste or 'blackwater' tanks. Residents of Lake County can solve most of these problems with simple actions.

Sewage overflows: While you don't have access to the wastewater treatment plant, you do have control over how much water you send to it. Sewage overflows are more common during rainy weather and power outages, and conserving water in your house will help reduce the amount of water going to the plant for treatment.

Animal waste: This is as simple as picking up after your dog or cat. Pet waste should be placed in your garbage for proper disposal. It can also be flushed down the toilet if it's free of plastic bags, large amounts of kitty litter, or large wads of paper towel. If you own larger animals, Lake SWCD can help you develop a manure management procedure. There may be cost-share money available as well.

Septic systems: Make sure your septic system is working properly. There shouldn't be a discharge of water into any nearby stream, pond, wetland or other body of water. Septic tanks also need pumped out every few years. By maintaining your system, you help keep our rivers and Lake Erie clean. You also may avoid expensive repairs.

Recreational boats: It is illegal to discharge your blackwater anywhere in the Great Lakes. Have your blackwater tank pumped out at the marina.



COME SEE US
AT THE FAIR
AUGUST 17-22

STUDENTS VISIT LAKE COUNTY FOR OHIO ENVIROTHON COMPETITION (See Page 2 for more)

An Envirothon team observes Jordan Creek to inform their answers at the Groundwater station. Lake Metro parks Environmental Learning Center hosted the field competition portion of Envirothon on June 14th.



For more information on bacterial levels at Ohio's beaches, head to http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/eh/bbeach/beach_sample_monitoring.aspx. The Lake County General Health District monitors water quality at beaches at Headlands and Fairport Harbor and their findings can be found at the link above.

ENVIROTHON TAKES NORTHEAST OHIO BY STORM

Thousands of students from across Ohio had natural resources on the brain this spring. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Resources, the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts across Ohio worked with thousands of high school students to prepare for this year's competitions.

In Lake County, the Envirothon season kicks off in early October with the Quad County Envirothon. This year's training event was hosted at West Woods by Geauga SWCD, and included schools from Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga and Ashtabula Counties. For some students, this was the first time they've ever really examined a soils pit, or gotten to talk with a forester about the trees they were standing among.

After Quad County Envirothon, teams return to their schools to train throughout the winter. In some schools the Envirothon team is pulled from a science class, while in other schools, Envirothon is an extra-curricular activity that meets before or after school. Every year students are expected to familiarize themselves with aquatic ecology, soils and land use, forestry, and wildlife. There is also a current issues theme that changes every year. For the 2009-2010 Envirothon season, that theme was groundwater.

On the last Wednesday in April, Envirothon teams from the 17 counties in Northeast Ohio gather for the Area 2 Envirothon. This year's event was held at Camp Wise and hosted by Geauga SWCD and Trumbull SWCD. Over 70 teams competed for the privilege of representing Northeast Ohio at Ohio Envirothon. Lake County was represented by two teams from Perry High School and two teams from Riverside High School. Chardon High School came out on top, followed closely by teams from Crestview High School and United High School, both in Columbiana County. Perry High School took home the prize from the Groundwater station, and placed 6th overall. Similar events were held in four other parts of the state in the last week of April and the first week of May. The results of the five Area Envirothons set the stage to bring the top 20 teams to Lake County in June.

Lake SWCD played host to

Envirothon is an annual outdoor academic competition that tests students' knowledge of soil and land use, forestry, wildlife, aquatic ecology and current environmental issues.

Ohio Envirothon June 14th and 15th and made Lake Erie College home for two days. Teams descended on the campus early in the morning, some travelling from as far away as West Union, Ohio, on the edges of Shawnee State Forest. After a brief orientation, the teams were transported to Lake Metroparks' Environmental Learning Center for field testing. The ELC opened their building, their trails, and even a piece of ground for a soil pit. Students worked together on questions posed by numerous natural resources experts from public and private sector. By 4:30, they had completed 5 tests and could have earned up to 500 points.

Back on campus after dinner, the Envirothon teams began working on a presentation worth an additional 200 points. They were given a scenario that required them to apply their knowledge of natural resources to develop a parcel of land into a subdivision, while protecting water quality and aquatic habitat. Just over three hours later, they sealed all of their presentation materials into bags, packed them away for the night and went to bed.

Tuesday morning, each team prepared themselves to meet with the judges. They had just six minutes to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the scenario they were given, and also had to field questions from the three judges. For the teams who weren't in the judging room, there was a workshop with Chad Pregracke, founder of Living Lands and Waters.

By lunch time the presentations were over, and students lined up for the banquet, guest speaker, and awards presentations. Medals went to the following station winners:

Aquatics: Chardon Red

Groundwater: Chardon Red

Wildlife: Chardon Red, Granville (tie)

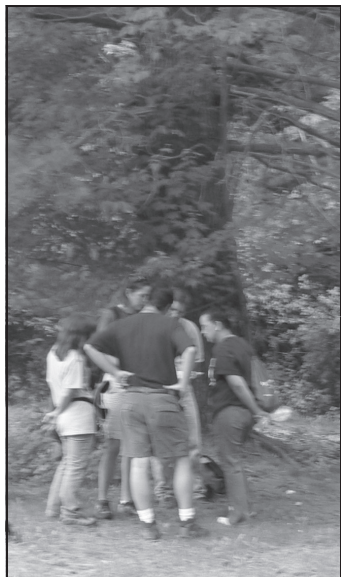
Forestry: Chardon Red, Fort Jennings, Franklin, United (tie)

Soils: Chardon Black

Presentation: West Union

Chardon Red was declared the overall winner. They received a plaque, a check for \$300 and most importantly, the right to represent Ohio at Canon Envirothon in Fresno, California. There they will compete with the best teams from 53 state and provinces.

Ohio Envirothon was sponsored by many agencies and corporations. Local sponsors include Lubrizol Corporation, CSX, and Lake Metroparks. They joined other major sponsors such as ODNR Division of Forestry, Division of Wildlife, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pheasants Forever, the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Ohio Environmental Education Fund.



SWEEP AWAY STORM WATER POLLUTION POTENTIAL

Summer is the peak of outdoor chore season. Whether you love it or loathe it, summer typically involves washing the car, mowing the lawn, mulching, painting the house, and many other tasks around the house. Chances are pretty good that your driveway is a staging area for many of these chores. It can also be a conduit for pollutants to reach the street and a storm drain.

Most lawn mowers throw grass clippings out the side. Often these end up on the driveway, the sidewalk or the street. **Try changing your mowing pattern so clippings get thrown away from paved areas.** Grass clippings are good for your lawn - they provide moisture and nutrients for the growing plants in your lawn. Research has proven that thatch is caused by overuse of fertilizer or pesticides, not a buildup of grass clippings.

If you have to blow grass clippings onto your driveway, **reach for the broom instead of the hose.** Sweep the clippings back into the lawn and you retain the nutrients in your soil. Washing the clippings into the street only moves those nutrients into the storm water system where they can disrupt drainage, and lead to algae overgrowth and fish kills. A leaf blower is better than a hose, but be careful with the mixed gas and clean up any spills promptly.



Many lawn and garden chores require power tools. This usually means gas cans and two-stroke mixed gas. If you are prone to spilling gasoline,

prepare by spreading newspapers on the ground before you fill the tank. **Clean up spills with absorbent material** such as kitty litter, then sweep up the absorbent and throw it away.

If you are going to be scraping siding or refinishing furniture, take care with the paint flakes as they come off. Working over a tarp is a great way to **collect stripped paint and throw it in the trash.** You can also use a wet/dry vacuum if you work on the driveway and haven't used solvents. Extra paint that is still liquid should be securely stored for the next Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day. Check out the Solid Waste District's website (<http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/Divisions/SolidWaste/tabid/353/Default.aspx>) for the next Collection Day and details on what can be dropped off. **Household Hazardous Collection Days are open to any Lake County resident.**

Finally, consider starting a compost pile. Those weeds and hedge trimmings could be the key to a successful garden a few years down the road if you start composting them now. Add in potato peelings and watermelon rinds after you pack a picnic, and you will be surprised at how fast your compost pile turns 'garbage' into beautiful, dark compost. Even if you don't want to compost, **do not throw weeds, grass clippings or other yard waste onto steep slopes or stream banks.** A buildup of yard waste will kill the living vegetation that stabilizes the slope.

If you have questions about Lake County's Stormwater program, check out the Stormwater Management Department's website at <http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/smd> or call them at 440-350-5900.

RAIN BARRELS: COMING TO A DOWNSPOUT NEAR YOU

Have you noticed blue barrels appearing in your neighborhood? Seen someone cutting their downspout with a saw or tin snips? Been distracted by a truck piled full of barrels? That is because people have learned the benefits of rain barrels! More than 175 rain barrels have been built at Lake SWCD workshops held at Holden Arboretum, through Lake Metroparks programs, or at our tree sale or our office. That means over 9,500 gallons of water could be kept out of urban streams, ditches, basements, and Lake Erie in every rain. Instead this water will be used to water flowers, vegetables, and lawns. It will then either evaporate or filter through the soil into groundwater aquifers. These aquifers are what feed streams and keep them flowing through the long dry spells of summer. Fish, mayflies, stoneflies, and other gill-breathing organisms rely on these sources of perennial, cool water.

The rain barrel systems we are building are not an open system. We use several

styles of 'downspout diverters' to direct water into a barrel until it is full. Any additional water goes down the downspout like normal. This avoids the unsightly problem of the splashing mud of a barrel overflow. It also helps keep you in compliance with any local ordinances that might prohibit

disconnecting downspouts. The barrel system is also closed so mosquitoes cannot breed inside. Currently, Lake SWCD has barrels and diverters in stock. If you would like to build a rain barrel, call our office at 440-350-2730 to make arrangements. The price is currently \$49 per rain barrel system.





Recycled Paper

WHO WANTS TO BE A CONSERVATIONIST?

Ohio Envirothon Edition. How would you do against the top 20 high school teams in the state?

1) What is groundwater?

- A. Water occurring in the zone of saturation in an aquifer or soil
- B. Water found in streams, ponds, lakes, or other freshwater sources
- C. Water in a wetland
- D. Precipitation

2). Even during times of drought most streams in Ohio continue to flow. The water in the streams during these times is most likely from what source?

- A. Sewage-treatment-plant effluent
- B. Condensation
- C. Groundwater seeping into the streambed
- D. Glacial meltwater

3) Define Porosity

- A. Amount of water that can be pumped from a well in 1 hour
- B. The ratio of small particles to large particles in a rock
- C. The ratio of the volume of void space to the total volume of rock or sediment
- D. Well depth minus casing height

4) Define Permeability

- A. Acceleration due to gravity times aquifer thickness
- B. Relative ease with which water can move through spaces in the aquifer
- C. Amount of capillary action above the water table
- D. Annual recharge minus base flow

5) True or false: Drawing too much water out of a well can permanently damage the aquifer and render the well dry.

Answers:
1. A
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. True

LAKE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

125 E. Erie St., Painesville, OH 44077

•440-350-2730 (main number) •FAX 440-350-2601

Toll-free •428-4348 ext. 2730 Madison/Perry

•918-2730 Cleveland/Western Lake County

•1-800-899-LAKE ext 2730 outside Lake County only

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 am-4:00 pm

•E-mail: soil@lakecountyohio.org

•Web site: www.lakecountyohio.org/soil

DAN DONALDSON, District Administrator	350-2030
CHAD EDGAR, Urban Stream Specialist	350-2032
BETH LANDERS, Education/Information Coordinator	350-2033
MAURINE ORNDORFF, Agricultural Programs Technician	350-5863
MATTHEW SCHARVER, Resource Protection Specialist	350-2031
AL BONNIS, District Conservationist, NRCS	437-5888
JOHN NIEDZIALEK, Western Reserve RC&D Coordinator	350-2034

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DICK BAKER (1998-2006, 2008), NORTH PERRY, SECRETARY
BILLIE KAMIS (2006), WILLOUGHBY HILLS, CHAIR
BRUCE LANDEG (2007), MENTOR, FISCAL AGENT
SKIP DUGAN (2009), PERRY, TREASURER
CARLA LEE (2010), CONCORD, VICE CHAIR

MEMBER OF:

- American Farmland Trust •Lake County Farm Bureau
- Nursery Growers of Lake County Ohio
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER: All Lake SWCD and USDA programs and services are available without regard to race, age, gender, national origin, political beliefs, color, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

The public is invited to attend Lake SWCD's monthly Board meetings, held the fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:00 pm at 125 East Erie St., Painesville. Meeting announcements appear under the public agenda in the News-Herald and on the Lake SWCD website. Please call in advance to let us know you will be attending.